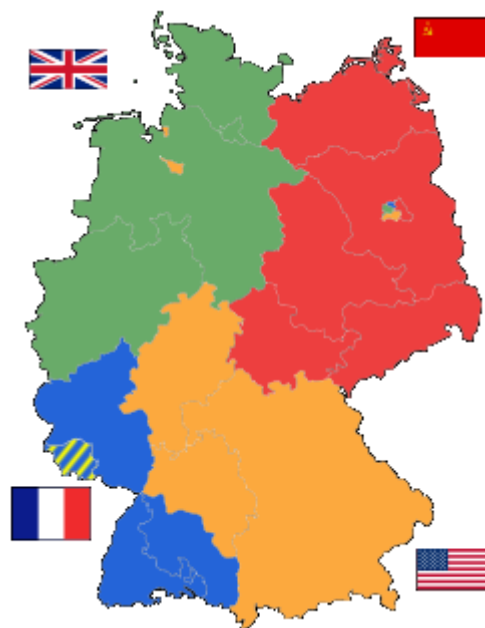


After the end of the war, a conference was held in Potsdam, Germany, to **set up** peace **treaties**. The countries that fought with Hitler lost **territory** and had to pay **reparations** to the **Allies**. Germany and its capital Berlin were **divided** into four parts. The zones were to be controlled by Great Britain, the United States, France and the Soviet Union. The three western **Allies** and the Soviet Union **disagreed** on many things and as time went on Germany was **divided** into two **separate** countries : East Germany , which had a Communist government and West Germany, which was a democratic **state**. Berlin was also **divided** into East and West Berlin. Austria was also **occupied** by the four **Allies** from 1945 to 1955.

One by one, the Russians started to **take over** countries in eastern Europe and **install** Communist **governments** there. The division of Europe was the beginning of the Cold War, between the democratic nations of the west and the Communist countries of eastern Europe. The Iron Curtain **marked** the **border** between these two regions.

After the war many Nazi leaders were **arrested** and **punished** for what they had done in the war. The most famous **war trials** were held at Nuremberg, Germany. Those who were **responsible** for brutal crimes were **sentenced** to death.



The division of Germany



Planes waiting to take off from a Berlin airport

Many problems **arose** after the war was over. One of them **focused** on the city of Berlin which was deep inside the Russian zone. In June 1948, the Soviet Union tried to drive the western powers out of Berlin by blocking all **routes** to the city. For a whole year the **Allies** flew in food, **fuel** and other things that the population needed to **survive**. Finally , the Russians gave up and the blockade ended. In 1961 the Russians built a wall around Berlin to stop their **citizens** from **escaping** to the west.

The biggest **task** was to rebuild Europe, which lay in **ruins**. In 1948 the United States set up the Marshall Plan to help Europe's **economy**. 18 nations **received** 13 **billion** dollars worth of food machines and other **goods**.

During World War II , four of the **Allied** powers—the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China—**agreed** to **create** an organization that should work for **peace** . In April 1945 fifty countries signed a **charter** and gave birth to the United Nations.



The **signing** of the UN **charter** in San Francisco and the UN flag



**WORDS**

- **Allies** = the countries that fought against Germany in the Second World War
- **arise—arose—arisen** = to come up, begin
- **arrest** = if a person is taken to a police station because they may have done something against the law
- **billion** = one thousand million
- **border** = line between two regions or countries
- **charter** = a set of rules that countries agree on
- **citizen** = a person who lives in a country and has rights there
- **create** = start, make
- **disagree** = to have a different opinion, to quarrel
- **divide** = split, break up into
- **economy** = the buying and selling of goods in a country
- **escape** = to get away from
- **focus** = concentrate on
- **fuel** = coal, gas or oil that can be burned to make heat
- **goods** = products that you buy and sell
- **government** = the people who rule a country
- **install** = set up
- **mark** = to be a sign of, to show where something is
- **occupy** = to send soldiers to a place and have them stay there for a longer time
- **peace** = opposite of war
- **punish** = to make someone suffer because they have done something wrong
- **receive** = get
- **reparations** = the money the countries that have lost the war have to pay to the winners
- **responsible** = to blame for something
- **routes** = here: roads, railway lines, canals, rivers
- **ruins** = what is left of a building or structure
- **sentence** = the punishment that a judge gives a person
- **separate** = single, independent
- **set up** = organize
- **sign** = to put your name on a document
- **state** = country
- **survive** = to continue to live on after a dangerous situation
- **take over** = to get power; to start being in control
- **task** = job, mission
- **territory** = land
- **treaty** = a written document between two people or countries
- **war trial** = people who are responsible for war crimes are put before a court